

The Sunday School

LESSON FOR APRIL 3

BY THE EDITOR

The Woman of Canaan—Matt. 15: 21-31

GOLDEN TEXT.—Then came she and worshipped him saying, Lord, help me.—Matt. 15: 25.

LESSON THOUGHT.—An earnest, loving, abiding faith, the Lord will not dispense.

Home Readings

The Woman of Canaan, Matt. 15: 21-31.
Cry of little faith, Matt. 14: 22-33.
According to faith, Matt. 9: 27-31.
An urgent plea, Luke 18: 35-43.
Faith commended, Luke 7: 1-10.
Salvation through faith, Rom. 10: 1-13.
Mark's narrative, Mark 7: 24-30.

Introductory Notes

Just why Jesus departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon is a matter of conjecture. It may have been on account of the growing spirit of persecution, and the turning away of the Jews from his teachings, and even those who were his disciples. Capernaum was no longer a safe place for the Son of man; his hour had not yet come; the work of training the twelve was not yet complete, and thus Jesus withdrew from the scene of danger into the regions around Tyre and Sidon, etc.

Meaning of the Text

21 *Went thence.* From Capernaum. *Coasts.* The neighborhood. *Tyre—Sidon.* The two principle cities of Phœnicia, on the Mediterranean Sea, famous in ancient times for their wealth and commerce.

22 *Woman of Canaan.* She was a Gentile. The Phœnicians were Baal-worshippers. Mark says, "A Greek, a Syrophenician by nation." Canaan described her religion. *Have mercy on us,* she cried to Jesus. She made her child's case her own. *Son of David.* Tho she was a Gentile, she knew of the Jew's Messianic hopes. She lived in the neighborhood of Jews, and believed this to be the one for whom the Jews looked. *Vexed with a devil.* She was demonized. It was a peculiarly painful case.

23 *Answered not a word.* Acted as if he had not heard her, paid no heed to her. *Send her away.* The disciples wanted him to cure her so as to get rid of her. It was not so much a matter of pity with them as a desire to get rid of her crying.

24 *Answered.* This he said to the disciples, tho she may have heard it also. His personal mission was to the Jews, or to them first. To begin his work with the Gentiles would have made his task more difficult, and was also contrary to the divine order.

25 *Worshipped him.* The reply to the disciples did not discourage her, it only brought her nearer in more earnest pleadings. An earnest soul is not easily discouraged or put off.

26, 27 *Children's bread-dogs.* The children were the Jews, the Gentiles, dogs. The

have religious duties on hand? Deut. 31: 12; Ex. 20: 10; Heb. 10: 25.

2. What lesson can we learn from the hospitality of the Shunemite woman? II Kings 4: 8-37.

3. When may the duty of hospitality be preferred to other duties? I Sam. 21: 1-6; Mark 2: 25, 26.

4. Show that hospitality does not consist in mere slavish service to the guest. Luke 10: 38-42.

5. What lesson about prejudice does the hospitality of Zaccheus teach us? Luke 19: 1-10.

6. How do people sometimes sin in the name of hospitality?

7. What is the best thing we can do for a person in need?

8. Show how we are, after all, but strangers here, enjoying a temporary hospitality. I Pet. 2: 11; Heb. 13: 14.

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HOLY GROWTH

He who looks at the divine image that is revealed in God's word—looks that he may learn, looks to understand with his whole heart—becomes Christlike; and the more he looks, the more he is changed. This is in accord with the laws of all mental and moral development. It is simply the natural thing to expect growth in holiness. Sanctification is a process. This, to be sure, does not mean that the passage of time, or itself alone, will promote growth in grace. The student is not the possessor of stores of knowledge simply because years have passed over his head since he began at the rudiments of learning, but because he has diligently employed those years in study. Time leaves no deposits of sanctity upon the idle Christian any more than it leaves deposits of learning upon the idle scholar. But the diligent Christian does grow. As the years go by he finds his spiritual joys fuller and his spiritual power larger. Others, perhaps more clearly than himself, see the growing image of Christ which he bears. It is a progress from glory to glory. It is a glory to any one to reflect in even some feeble measure the image of Christ, and it is transcendent glory to reflect that image so fully that men are sure you have companied with Christ as they see your whole being shining with his grace, even as did the face of Moses when he had been on the mount alone with God.—*N. Y. Observer.*

"The impurity of the soul," said a wise man, "is the soul's bad opinions, and the purification of the soul is the planting in it of proper opinions." Let us put away every evil thing. Let us cherish everything that is good and true, let us make life the imitation of Christ. Let us exercise our hearts in those sweet strains of prayer wherein our Savior sang to the Father alone upon the mountain top. Let us remember the listening ear of God. Let us humbly hope that we may awaken praise in our brother's heart; and in view of all of our Father's love and grace, say with the Psalmist: "Bless the Lord, oh, my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, oh, my soul and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies."—*Sol.*

Jews applied the name to all who were not of the chosen race. The dog in the east was a symbol of impurity. (Phil. 3: 2.) Mark 7: 27 says, "Let the children first be filled." The word "first" would give the woman a little hope. Both are to be fed and there is bread for all, only the Jew first. *She said.* Did not argue or resent the reproach of being called a dog. *Truth—Lord.* What you say is true, but even this gives me a claim. The dogs are entitled to the crumbs. Give the Jews what belongs to them and let me have what is left.

28 *Great—faith.* Christ found the greatest faith in Gentiles. Chap. 8: 10. *As thou wilt.* Her request is granted. Faith won as it always does. It was an earnest, persevering faith, the faith that gets a blessing. *From that hour.* The woman returned and found her daughter made whole.

29-31 *Jesus departed.* From Phœnicia to Galilee. Mark 7: 31. *A mountain.* The mountain country, the highland. *Sat down.* That he might rest for a season, tho the rest was soon broken. *Great multitude.* Various motives brought them. Some were sick, others hungry, others felt the need of his divine help. *Cast them down.* Came in haste, with apparently full confidence in his healing power. *Healed them.* All who were brought. *Wondered.* See Mark 7: 37. The people were astonished for they had never seen it on this wise.

To Make You Think

1. Why did Jesus go from Capernaum into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon? 2. Had this woman knowledge of the fact that Jesus could help her? 3. Did she know that Jesus would help her? 4. Where and in what way did she acquire this knowledge? 5. Why did Jesus delay the answer to this woman's request? 6. Was this delay for her good? 7. In what way? 8. What was the nature of the disease of her daughter? 9. Are people possessed of such disease now? 10. From what demons does the world need deliverance? 11. Who only can deliver it? 12. What is the most common difficulty people have to overcome in coming to Jesus? 13. In what four ways was this woman's a great faith? 14. What were the great obstacles she had to overcome? 15. Do people now exercise such faith? 16. Does faith always overcome? 17. How do we gain the victory over the world? 18. Is Christianity doing the works now that Jesus did when he was hear on earth? 19. What are the three elements of a great faith? 20. Is faith a gift of God or is it merely the exercise of one's own will?

Thoughts for Young People

Concerning Trouble

1. *Everywhere there are people in trouble.* Jesus had found them among the Jews, now he finds them among the Gentiles. They are to be found to-day in the church and out of it, among the rich and the poor, but sometimes the bitterest trouble is concealed and unsuspected, and the troubled ones are